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LETTER DATED 7 MARCH 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Please find enclosed the text of a letter signed by Ljubomir Frckoski, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia, dated 7 March 1997, concerning the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) mission in the Republic of Macedonia (see annex). I should be grateful if you would bring the content of the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Naste CALOVSKI
Ambassador

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Annex

Letter dated 7 March 1997 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia addressed to the Secretary-General

Since this is my first official address to you in your capacity as Secretary-General of our Organization, allow me once again to congratulate you on having been appointed to this extraordinarily important and responsible post, and to express our appreciation for the continuous personal engagement and support you had hitherto given as Under-Secretary for Peacekeeping Operations, to the successful functioning of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) mission in the Republic of Macedonia and to the accomplishment of its original mandate, as the first successful example of implementation of the concept of preventive diplomacy in the history of the United Nations.

On this occasion, following up on our conversation in New York on 10 February 1997, allow me on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia to express our concern with the fact that the overall situation in the region has regrettably deteriorated further. I have primarily in mind the recent escalation of the crisis in neighbouring Albania, where disorders caused by "pyramid investment schemes" have brought about the imposition of a state of emergency. Any further escalation of riots that may cause flows of refugees may seriously jeopardize security in the region, especially in the immediate neighbourhood. That is why the process of reduction of UNPREDEP military personnel and withdrawal from certain observation posts along the border with Albania appear unfortunately to have begun at the most inappropriate time.

These current events are another destabilizing factor in the still fragile security situation in the region and may easily complicate it and cause a mutual spillover effect. I would like to refrain from going into details in describing the situation in the neighbouring Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), since it is beyond doubt that it has caused widespread concern in the international community. Moreover, one should take into account that this has a negative impact on the already complex situation in Kosovo, where tensions continue to rise.

Without broad elaboration of other standing issues, I deem that this clearly depicts the cumulated uncertainty with respect to security risks and potential implications. That is why, in our deep conviction, the Security Council should be informed of the situation, pursuant to paragraph 3 of Council resolution 1082 (1996) and of our request for an urgent suspension of the reduction of UNPREDEP military personnel, as foreseen in paragraph 1 of the resolution.

I would kindly ask you to circulate the present letter to the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dr. Ljubomir FRCKOSKI
Minister